

Imperial factories could, in ordinary times, furnish monthly 20,000 stands of new arms ; by the extraordinary activity and inducements offered this number was doubled. Workmen were also employed in repairing the old muskets. There was displayed at this momentous period the same activity in the capital as in 1793, and better directed, though without the same ultimate success. The clothing of the army was another difficulty, and this was got over by advancing large sums of money to the cloth manufacturers beforehand. The contractors delivered 20,000 cavalry horses before the 1st of June, 10,000 . trained horses had been furnished by the dismounted gendarmerie. Twelve thousand artillery horses were also delivered by the 1st of June, in addition to 6000 which the army already had.

The facility with which the Ministers of Finance and of the Treasury provided for all these expenses astonished everybody, as it was necessary to pay for everything in ready money. The system of public works was at the same time resumed throughout France. " It is easy to see," said the workmen, " that ' the great contractor' is returned: all was dead, now everything revives." To account for all this lavish expenditure an opinion prevailed that the Emperor on his return had found 100,000,000 livres in gold at the Tuileries. The King had, indeed, quitted Paris with such precipitation that he had not been able to carry away the crown-plate, valued at 6,000,000, nor the treasury-chests of the departments, containing 50,000,000 more. But the chief resource which Napoleon found on his return was in the good will of the people, and in the confidence of the great French and Dutch capitalists arising out of it. Voluntary donations were also numerous, and in some departments exceeded 1,000,000. At the military parades he was often presented with bundles of bank-bills, and on his return to the palace had to give the Minister of the Treasury 80,000 or 100,000 francs which he had received in this manner.

It was soon evident that the scene of the grand conflict would be on the Flemish border — the old battle-field of Europe. The whole of the fortified line of the Low Coun-